

King James Bible Study Correspondence Course

An Outreach of Highway Evangelistic Ministries
5311 Windridge lane ~ Lockhart, Florida 32810 ~ USA

Filling in the Gaps
Lesson 35B
Wisdom and the tongue

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Have you ever heard the saying *"It is better to remain silent and be thought a fool than to open your mouth and remove all doubt."* Actually, this gets its roots from the Bible.

Let's start back with James chapter three. There is something we need to see in a few verses.

Verse 13, ***Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom.*** This is a rhetorical question. Who's a wise man and endued with knowledge? If you are, here's how you can demonstrate that - ***let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom.***

We cannot just self-identify as wise. We are not wise because we say we are. If we are wise, it will show in our conversation. Biblically, this is more than just what we say, it is the entirety of our lifestyle. The verses also says it will show in our works. Are you wise? Show it with what you say and what you do.

James 3:14 ***But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth.***

James 3:15 ***This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish.***

James 3:16 ***For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work.***

James 3:17 ***But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.***

James 3:18 ***And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.***

Look closely at the verses above while I explain this to you:
Verse 14: We ought not be so proud that nobody can get along with us. That does not prove how spiritual we are. It proves quite the opposite.
Verse 15: The wisdom of verse 14 does not come from God. It is sensual and devilish.
Verse 16: Confirms the more that where strife is there is confusion.

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Verse 17: But the wisdom of God is from above.

Verse 18: Confirms the true wisdom.

What is the context of James Chapter 3, the tongue or wisdom? Both. There is an inescapable connection; both here and throughout scripture. Wisdom is the ability to use our tongue to help somebody else. If we are wise, we will use our tongue to encourage and not to tear down somebody else.

Let's go to the Book of Wisdom. Proverbs 15:1 ***A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger.*** Remember James 3:16 - envy, strife. Wisdom is being slow to wrath. Proverbs 15:2 ***The tongue of the wise useth knowledge aright: but the mouth of fools poureth out foolishness.***

What is wisdom? We can define wisdom as the application of knowledge; the use of knowledge; using what we know to make right choices. How does this wisdom relate to speech? What is the right way to demonstrate wisdom with our words? It is not boasting, bragging or causing contention and strife as mentioned in James 3. The book of Proverbs gives us the answers, the alternatives.

Proverbs 10:19 ***In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin: but he that refraineth his lips is wise*** Sometimes the wisest thing to do is to say nothing. I'll repeat the same quotation, *"It's better to remain silent and be thought a fool than open your mouth and remove all doubt."* There is a time to speak.

Ecclesiastes 3:7 ***A time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;***

However, the Bible says we are to be living witnesses (sacrifices) (Romans 12:1). We can't just be silent and say nothing. There is no such thing as a life-style Christian where one does not open his mouth. We can't miss out on opportunities to use this gift of speech to glorify God and to help other people. We can't witness without speaking. We must speak up in certain situations. But how can we do so and demonstrate wisdom?

Proverbs 12:17 ***He that speaketh truth sheweth forth righteousness: but a false witness deceit.*** It never helps anybody if we lie to them. Truth is always right.

Proverbs 12:18 ***There is that speaketh like the piercings of a sword: but the tongue of the wise is health.***

This is the very basic core of the matter. My speech can be evidence of wisdom when knowledge and love combine, and what I say is true and helpful. Love is speaking for the benefit of the other individual.

Proverbs 29:11 ***A fool uttereth all his mind: but a wise man keepeth it in till afterwards.*** A wise man who has something to say won't blurt it out right away. He will give it some time and consider if it is needful and/or thoughtful. The Bible says in Proverbs 15:28 ***The heart of the righteous studieth to answer: but***

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the mouth of the wicked poureth out evil things. Ecclesiastes 10:12 The words of a wise man's mouth are gracious; but the lips of a fool will swallow up himself.

Are you demonstrating wisdom? Jesus spoke as one having authority, not as the scribes. The people could not believe the authority with which He spoke. John 7:46 ***The officers answered, Never man spake like this man.*** That same passage says they wondered at the gracious words which came out of his mouth. The Bible says, if we are wise, that is the way we will speak. Look at Ecclesiastes, 12:11. ***The words of the wise are as goads, and as nails fastened by the masters of assemblies, which are given from one shepherd.*** A goad is used to prod, to poke, to encourage movement and activity. The words of the wise are as goads. The idea here is that we are supposed to use our words to try to encourage others in their activity.

The Bible commands us not to forsake going to church. Look at Hebrews 10:25 ***Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.*** Why? We need to ***consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:*** When God told us he wanted us to provoke one another, he didn't want us to annoy one another. He wants us to encourage one another, to prod one another, to use our words to say, ***"Hey brother, let's go stand on the street corner, pass out some tracts, and spend some time in prayer."*** Let us use our words to encourage Christian activity, to prompt good actions with kind encouraging words.

With the help of the Holy Spirit, we need to bridle the tongue. We need to demonstrate wisdom in our speech through truth, love, grace, and encouragement. Proverbs 31:26 ***She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness.*** The above verse applies to men also. See Ephesians 4:32.

Proverbs 11:30 ***The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life; and he that winneth souls is wise.*** It is important to have wisdom when we speak. Wisdom relates to witnessing and winning others to Christ. We must speak in order to do that. We cannot preach the gospel without using words. There's a message that we must declare to the world - that Christ died for our sins, was buried, and rose again the third day according to the scriptures. It is important that we do this wisely. The bible says in Matthew 10:16 ***Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.*** We should be faithful, zealous, bold, and effective.

Let's just take a moment to examine our speech - what we say, and how we say it. Is it a demonstration of love and good works? Does it show any wisdom?

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Name _____

Note: (*) An asterisk indicates your answer must include scripture for proof.

1. What is wisdom?
2. What are goads?
3. How can you suppress anger? *
4. Is a wise man known by his prolific use of the English language? Why?*
5. Why is it important for you to attend church weekly? *
6. What is so different about the way a wise man speaks? *
7. Explain Romans 12:1.
8. What is the connection between the tongue and wisdom? *
9. Why would you act proud, thinking you are wise? *

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10. What grows out of being proud thinking you are wise? *
11. Where does true wisdom come from? *
12. How can you demonstrate your knowledge in hurtful ways? *
13. Why is it always important to tell the truth? *
14. What is the proper way to demonstrate wisdom? *
15. What did you learn from Lessons 35A & 35B? *

True/false

- He who shouts the loudest will win the argument. *
- The person that talks the most is wise. *
- The tongue of the wise is health. *



Scripture memorization

Proverbs 10:19; Ecclesiastes 12:11; James 3:13; James 3:17

Write out these verses on the back on this page: (must be in KJV)
any questions?